

guardsmen and reservists rely on the support and patience of their families, their wives and husbands and daughters and sons who must bear the prolonged absence of a loved one. They rely on their civilian employers to put the national interest above the corporate or self interests. Employers of guard and reserve members make possible the contributions of our citizen soldiers. By supporting the mobilization of patriots, employers are demonstrating their own patriotism.

With us today are representatives of companies that have given outstanding support to the Guard and to the Reserve. Central Atlantic Toyota Distribution Center, D.H. Griffin Wrecking Company, Miller Brewing, Pacific Gas and Electric Corporation, Tyson Foods are all winners of this year's Secretary of Defense Employers Support Freedom Award.

These companies do all their utmost to support and encourage service in America's National Guard and Reserve. They provide pay, health care benefits, and job security to the men and women who are called to active duty. They recognize that their workers are fighting to keep America free.

Other companies are making equally important contributions. Albertson's, Clear Channel Airports, Home Depot, and Verizon all provide outstanding support to their employees during mobilizations. All of us appreciate the generosity and the public spirit shown by these outstanding companies and many others like them around our country.

Members of the guard and reserve are with us today. We're proud of your service. We thank you for your sacrifice. The war on terror has drawn on many of America's strengths, and one of the greatest strengths is the citizen-soldier, like Specialist James Dexter of the Illinois National Guard. At home, Specialist Dexter is a volunteer firefighter. In Iraq, he is serving as a military police officer. On three separate occasions in a single month, Specialist Dexter rushed to the scene of traffic accidents, twice saving the lives of American soldiers and Iraqi citizens and once putting out a dangerous fire. He was awarded the Bronze Star. He has earned the gratitude of our country for his service.

America needs the Guard and Reserves more today than we have had in decades. We're at war. Yet we're fortunate that so many of our citizens have heeded the call to serve a cause greater than themselves. And we are fortunate that our Guard and Reserve units have received such support from America's business community. As a sign of America's gratitude, I'm pleased to invite representatives from the nine companies here today to join me in signing a proclamation designating National Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Week.

May God bless you all, and may God continue to bless our great country.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:16 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Rear Adm. David Janes, USN (Ret.), National Chair, National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

### **Proclamation 7736—National Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Week, 2003**

*November 14, 2003*

*By the President of the United States of America*

#### **A Proclamation**

From before the American Revolution, to the Civil War, to the wars in Vietnam and the Persian Gulf, our National Guard and Reserve have served our country with distinction. Today, our National Guard and Reserve forces are active on every front in the War on Terror. During National Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Week, we honor our courageous citizen-soldiers and their employers, whose continued support is vital to the success of our Armed Forces and to the strength of our country.

America's Guard and Reserve personnel are training hard and deploying frequently to meet new challenges worldwide. These brave defenders have performed combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. They have provided security at Guantanamo Bay. They have prepared for homeland security missions. Our Nation is blessed and grateful for

the service of the brave men and women of the National Guard and Reserve.

By supporting our Guardsmen and Reservists, employers across our Nation also are helping to advance freedom and democracy around the world. At the same time, these employers benefit from the experience and leadership skills these citizen-soldiers bring home. Employer support of our Guard and Reserve in the United States and abroad helps ensure our troops are mission-ready and is a source of pride and assurance for all Americans. This country is grateful to employers and workers for their support of Guard and Reserve members and their families. Because military deployment often disrupts families and businesses, my Administration is working to make deployments more predictable. Together, our National Guard and Reserve forces and their employers are united in purpose and reflect the highest standards of professionalism and honor.

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim November 16 through November 22, 2003, as National Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Week. I encourage all Americans to join me in expressing our heartfelt thanks to the members of our National Guard and Reserve and their civilian employers for their extraordinary sacrifices on behalf of our Nation. I also call on State and local officials, private organizations, businesses, and all military commanders to observe this week with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this fourteenth day of November, in the year of our Lord two thousand three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-eighth.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., November 18, 2003]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on November 19.

## **Statement on Senate Action To Block Up-or-Down Votes on Judicial Nominations**

*November 14, 2003*

Today's partisan action to block up-or-down votes on Justice Priscilla Owen, Judge Carolyn Kuhl, and Justice Janice Rogers Brown is inconsistent with the Senate's constitutional responsibility and is just plain wrong. Once again, a partisan minority of Senators has thwarted the will of the majority and stood in the way of voting on superb judicial nominees.

These obstructionist tactics are shameful, unfair, and have become all too common. At a time when the American people have important issues backlogged in the courts, partisan Senators are playing politics with the judicial process at the expense of timely justice for the American people.

I commend Senate Republicans, especially Leader Frist, Chairman Hatch, and Senator Santorum, for their leadership and commitment to the Constitution and basic fairness. During their 40-hour debate, these Senators have focused on the damaging vacancies that exist on the Federal courts of appeals, the highly qualified individuals I have nominated to serve, and the Senate's obligation to vote on every judicial nominee.

No matter who is President or which party controls the Senate, the American people deserve a well-functioning, independent judiciary and a commitment by all Senators to live up to their constitutional obligation.

## **Proclamation 7734—America Recycles Day, 2003**

*November 14, 2003*

*By the President of the United States of America*

### **A Proclamation**

To preserve America's majestic beauty, we must conserve our natural resources and practice responsible stewardship. On America Recycles Day, we reaffirm our commitment to conservation and recognize the increase in recycling in the last two decades.